EQUINOX CONSULTING

CHECKLIST

READINESS CHECKLIST

Go-live readiness checklist

Your launch date is set. Use these 48 questions to find the gaps while there is still time to close them.



48	6	96
questions	areas of readiness	points available

Equinox Consulting · Business process, systems and compliance change

BEFORE YOU START

Most go-live problems are visible weeks before launch.

They are usually gaps between workstreams: a decision that has not been made, a data owner who has not been named, an exception with no agreed route, or a control that stops working after handover.

For the people signing off the date, that means committing to a launch without knowing whether the business can run it. A launch should not depend on a few people working through the night to hold it together.

We have prepared go-lives at global banks, asset managers and sovereign investors. The same gaps come up each time, so this checklist is built around them.

STEP 1

Answer with your team

Include the people who will run the operation after launch.

STEP 2

Read your score

Your lowest areas show where the launch risk is.

STEP 3

Close the gaps first

Fix the most serious gaps before cut-over, not after.

Click Yes, Partly or No for each question. Scores add up as you go, answers are saved in this browser, and you can print the completed checklist.

Y Yes, with evidence = 2 P Partly = 1 N No or not sure = 0

THE SIX AREAS

01	Governance and decision rights	8 questions
02	Process and operating model	8 questions
03	Data, systems and integration	8 questions
04	Controls, compliance, AML and KYC	8 questions

05 Testing, automation and cut-over 8 questions

06 Support, handover and ownership 8 questions

01

AREA 1 OF 6

Governance and decision rights

Late launches are often caused by decisions without a clear owner. These questions check who decides and on what evidence.

1.1	Has the steering committee agreed written, measurable go/no-go criteria before the final test cycle? Owner: Sponsor	Y P N
1.2	Does every open design decision have a named decision-maker and a due date, with the reasoning recorded? Owner: Programme lead	Y P N
1.3	Has the business owner signed off the known defects and workarounds going into production? Owner: Business owner	Y P N
1.4	Who can stop the launch, and does the cut-over plan say how they make that call out of hours? Owner: Sponsor	Y P N
1.5	Are vendor, integrator and internal responsibilities after go-live written into contracts or service schedules? Owner: Vendor manager	Y P N
1.6	Is there one person with the time and authority to chase decisions across teams each week? Owner: Sponsor	Y P N
1.7	Have change requests from the last two cycles been assessed for their effect on testing, data and training? Owner: PMO	Y P N
1.8	Is there a defined rollback point, and does everyone know when rollback stops being possible? Owner: Technical lead	Y P N

0 of 8 answered

Area score – / 16

02

AREA 2 OF 6

Process and operating model

This area covers how the work will run after launch, including the cases that go wrong.

2.1	Are the future-state processes written down to task level, including handoffs between front, middle and back office? Owner: Process owners	Y P N
2.2	Does every exception type have a queue, an owner, a service level and an escalation route? Owner: Operations lead	Y P N
2.3	Which manual workarounds will remain after launch, and does each one have an owner and an end date? Owner: Operations lead	Y P N
2.4	Have roles, segregation of duties and system access been mapped to the new process and approved? Owner: Risk / IT security	Y P N
2.5	Has the team walked through end-of-day, month-end and quarter-end against the new timetable? Owner: Finance / operations	Y P N
2.6	Has anyone checked which existing tools and spreadsheets the new system replaces, and which will stay? Owner: Operations lead	Y P N
2.7	If this change follows an acquisition, has one way of working been agreed for both teams? Owner: Integration lead	Y P N
2.8	Is there enough capacity for the first few weeks, when queries and exceptions peak? Owner: Operations lead	Y P N

0 of 8 answered

Area score – / 16

AREA 3 OF 6

03

Data, systems and integration

Data problems are the most common cause of a difficult launch. Can the numbers in the new system be trusted from day one?

3.1	Does each data domain (static, reference, positions, transactions, client) have a named owner who will sign off the migrated data? Owner: Data owners	Y P N
3.2	Have data from different sources and formats been brought into one agreed structure, with mapping rules documented? Owner: Data lead	Y P N
3.3	Were reconciliation tolerances agreed before migration started? Owner: Data lead	Y P N
3.4	Has at least one full migration rehearsal run on production-like volumes, with timings recorded? Owner: Technical lead	Y P N
3.5	Have interfaces and feeds been tested end to end, including late, duplicate and malformed files? Owner: Integration lead	Y P N
3.6	Have data quality issues found in testing been fixed at source? Owner: Data owners	Y P N
3.7	Can you still reach the historical data needed for reporting, audit and regulatory look-backs? Owner: Data owners	Y P N
3.8	Do opening positions and balances reconcile to both the legacy system and external records? Owner: Operations / finance	Y P N

0 of 8 answered

Area score – / 16

04

AREA 4 OF 6

Controls, compliance, AML and KYC

The control environment has to keep working once the old system is switched off.

4.1	Has each existing control been mapped to the new process, and have the ones that no longer apply been formally retired? Owner: Risk	Y P N
4.2	Does each new or changed control have an owner, a frequency, evidence requirements and a test date? Owner: Control owners	Y P N
4.3	Can regulatory reports be produced from the new system on time, and have they been compared with legacy output? Owner: Reporting lead	Y P N
4.4	Do KYC, AML and screening steps follow the approved policy, including referrals and escalations? Owner: Compliance	Y P N
4.5	Where AI or automated rules screen cases, is it clear where the tool stops and a person decides? Owner: Compliance	Y P N
4.6	Do audit trails show who changed what and when, and do records meet retention rules? Owner: IT / compliance	Y P N
4.7	Have qualified advisers reviewed the legal and regulatory dependencies in each jurisdiction, with sign-off on file? Owner: Compliance	Y P N
4.8	If something goes wrong during cut-over, who reports it, and to whom? Include regulators where required. Owner: Compliance	Y P N

0 of 8 answered

Area score – / 16

05

AREA 5 OF 6

Testing, automation and cut-over

Check that the test evidence supports the date and that cut-over is planned hour by hour.

5.1	Do system, integration and acceptance testing each have exit criteria, and has each been met or formally waived? Owner: Test lead	Y P N
5.2	Have business users tested their own day-in-the-life scenarios, including the awkward ones? Owner: Business owners	Y P N
5.3	Are open defects ranked by business impact, with a documented workaround for each one accepted into production? Owner: Test lead	Y P N
5.4	Have automated steps been tested with cases they cannot handle, and do those cases reach a person? Owner: Process owners	Y P N
5.5	Have performance and batch timings been tested at peak volumes, including month-end? Owner: Technical lead	Y P N
5.6	Does the cut-over runbook list each step with its owner, duration, dependency and verification check? Owner: Cut-over manager	Y P N
5.7	Has a parallel run or shadow period been considered, and is the decision recorded either way? Owner: Sponsor	Y P N
5.8	Are messages to staff, clients and counterparties scheduled for before, during and after cut-over? Owner: Change lead	Y P N

0 of 8 answered

Area score – / 16

06

AREA 6 OF 6

Support, handover and ownership

Who owns the operation once the project team steps back?

6.1	Does hypercare have a fixed length, exit criteria and a daily triage meeting with the business and vendor? Owner: Programme lead	Y P N
6.2	Are support tiers (super-users, service desk, vendor) named, trained and reachable out of hours? Owner: Service owner	Y P N
6.3	Have super-users been trained on exceptions and recovery as well as standard processing? Owner: Training lead	Y P N
6.4	Can support staff and users find the list of known issues and workarounds? Owner: Service owner	Y P N
6.5	Does each process, configuration and report pass to a named owner on a set date? Owner: Business owner	Y P N
6.6	If a key person leaves after launch, is there enough written down for someone else to run the process? Owner: Business owner	Y P N
6.7	Are the actions, decisions and defects still open at handover recorded, ranked and assigned? Owner: PMO	Y P N
6.8	Is a post-implementation review booked, with the benefits and measures it will check? Owner: Sponsor	Y P N

0 of 8 answered

Area score – / 16

READING YOUR SCORE

How to read your score

A late design decision changes the process. That changes the data mapping, so earlier test results no longer apply, and training and support are delayed too. If one area scores low, check the others again before you trust the total.

01	02	03	04	05	06
– / 16	– / 16	– / 16	– / 16	– / 16	– / 16

0 of 48 answered. Unanswered questions score 0. Clear answers

Total – / 96

85–96 — **Ready to launch**

Close the remaining items, confirm owners and keep the go/no-go criteria unchanged.

60–84 — **Launch risk**

The gaps are usually between workstreams. Close them before cut-over to avoid problems in the first month.

0–59 — **Not ready**

Re-plan before you commit to a date. A later date costs less than fixing a failed launch.

WHERE TO START

01	**Governance and decision rights**	Resetting governance: a decision log with owners and dates, written go/no-go criteria and a regular forum that makes the calls.
02	**Process and operating model**	Mapping the future process to task level with the people who run it, and agreeing owners for each handoff and exception.
03	**Data, systems and integration**	Naming data owners, agreeing tolerances up front and rehearsing the migration and interfaces at full volume.

04	**Controls, compliance, AML and KYC**	Mapping each control to the new process with an owner and evidence, and testing AML, KYC and reporting steps against the approved policy.
05	**Testing, automation and cut-over**	Setting exit criteria, having the business test its own scenarios and writing an hour-by-hour runbook with owners.
06	**Support, handover and ownership**	Fixing a hypercare period with exit criteria and handing each process, report and open action to a named owner on a set date.

IF THE GAPS STAY OPEN

The first month goes on backlogs, manual workarounds, reconciliation breaks and audit questions. The project team cannot step away, and the benefits arrive late.

WHEN THEY ARE CLOSED

A steady first week. Owners know which decisions are theirs, the numbers reconcile and the controls hold. The project team hands over on the planned date.

- Pause if you answered No to any question in Area 1 or Area 3, whatever the total. Governance and data gaps are rarely fixed during cut-over.

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NEXT STEP

Want a second view on your answers?

In a 30-minute call we go through your lowest-scoring areas with you and agree what to close first, whether your team does the work or we help.

Book a readiness review cal.com/hasan-veletanlic-a9upkr/30min

Not ready to talk yet? Read our notes on implementation, controls and automation at equinoxconsulting.io/blog.



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